

President Obama on July 19 signed an executive order creating a National Ocean Policy and the National Ocean Council and implementing other provisions that largely mirrored my Oceans-21 legislation. The executive order was based on final recommendations drafted by the Ocean Policy Task Force.

In 1998, I hosted President Clinton in Monterey at the National Ocean Conference, and now we're seeing that vision fulfilled. We already have a Clean Air Act and a Clean Water Act. With today's executive order, President Obama in effect creates a Clean Ocean Act.

The executive order puts in place a science-based ocean policy including improved coordination for ocean resource governance and a structured, regional approach to implementation. The executive order will also authorize a plan for coastal and marine spatial planning.

With so much attention focused on the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, it's vital that we use this time to craft policies that will help prevent future disasters and ensure responsible stewardship of the ocean. I've been working for years to establish a National Ocean Policy, and I'm excited to see my efforts endorsed by the president.

The key contents of the report, included in the executive order:

- A national policy for stewardship of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes, including key principles to guide decisions on ocean policy.
- Creation of a National Ocean Council to coordinate the many federal agencies with ocean oversight responsibilities.
- Nine key categories of action to help accomplish the goals of ocean conservation and stewardship.
- Framework for marine spatial planning.

Over the next year, responsible agencies will draft--with public input--the strategic action plans needed to carry out the executive order.

You can read the Ocean Policy Task Force's recommendation here: "National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes."

<http://www.farr.house.gov/images/stories/Documents/oceantaskforcerecs.pdf>

And read the president's executive order here.

<http://www.farr.house.gov/images/stories/Documents/oceanexecorder.pdf>

More exciting news: in July we broke ground on the new Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Exploration Center in Santa Cruz. The \$15 million facility, funding primarily by federal grants, is being built near the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf and is expected to draw more than 200,000 visitors per year.

[Click Here for E-Newsletter Home Page](#)